

MY LORD,

EDINBURGH, 27th March 1777.

WE are directed by a general meeting of the Baronets of Nova Scotia to address your Lordship upon a subject which we take the liberty to explain by the following facts.

In the year 1625, King Charles I. did, by letters patent, institute the order of Baronets of Nova Scotia, with a view to encourage the settlement of a colony in that country. To each of these Baronets his Majesty was pleased to make a grant of lands, along the sea-coast or the banks of navigable rivers, the boundaries of which are particularly and minutely described in the charters which remain in the possession of their respective families. These grants were confirmed by act of parliament, *anno* 1633. Our ancestors were not wanting in their endeavours to improve their new acquisitions. But the calamities of that reign soon diverted their attention from that distant country, and engaged them in the general interests of the nation. Nova Scotia was, in the mean time, seized by the French, and remained in their possession till the conclusion of the peace in 1762, by which it became once more a part of the British dominions.

The Baronets of Nova Scotia presume, that no prescription of law can operate against them, while their property was forcibly with-held from them by a hostile nation. They can therefore have no doubt, that their lands have now legally reverted to them; and have directed us to solicit your Lordship's countenance and assistance, in making application to his Majesty to restore them to those rights of their ancestors.

The difficulty of assembling so many different claimants, may have hitherto prevented a general application. And the impropriety of separating particular pretensions from the general interest of the order, may have hindered individuals from advancing their particular claims. But we flatter ourselves, your Lordship will not think a general application now too late. We ask not for new rights; we ask only the possession of rights already established. We have the honour to rank ourselves with those friends of government, whose attachment to the laws and liberties of their country hath taught them zeal for the dignity of the crown, and affection for the person of the Sovereign. If his Majesty should be pleased to reinstate us in our antient properties, we know that the influence which might arise to us upon the continent of America, would be faithfully employed in his Majesty's service, and, we flatter ourselves, might be of some importance in disseminating the principles of genuine patriotism and loyalty.

We

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EDINBURGH, 28th March 1777.

THE following is a copy of a letter approved of by a meeting of the committee of Baronets, on the 25th Inst. and transmitted to Sir William Forbes of Craigievar, Baronet, now in London, to be *presented* to Lord George Germaine.

The meeting recommend, it to their absent brethren, to order the sum of two guineas each, to be paid to Sir William Forbes, Baronet, Banker here, towards defraying expences.

I have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

*James Cumming*





We are aware, My Lord, of one objection which may be made to our application. It may have happened, that the lands described by the charters in our possession, are, in some instances, now occupied by others of his Majesty's subjects. In this case, we declare ourselves willing to accept of such an equivalent in land, as his Majesty, in his great justice, shall be pleased to assign us.

We take the liberty to transmit to your Lordship, as exact a list of the Baronets of Nova Scotia, who are in possession of rights to lands in that colony, as we have been able to obtain. May we hope that your Lordship will represent our claim to his Majesty, and the grounds upon which it is founded, and do us the honour to transmit to us his Majesty's answer?

We have the honour to be,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servants,

(Signed) ELPHINSTONE.

ELIBANK.

BANFF.

JAMES GRANT.

MICH. BRUCE.